

THE TORRENT'S VOICE.

They are good, the placid waters in the shadows of the wood;
And the amber shadows falling on the bayous, they are good;
And the mocking bird low swinging in the chinaberry tree
Sings a song of wondrous sweetness that is more than good to me!
But at least once in a twelve-month comes a coaxing calling tone
From the heaven-kissing mountains and the vales that were my own!
And the voices of the torrents that I stemmed when life was young
Come to me asleep or waking—sweeter songs were never sung!

Oh, the flower-spangled prairies stretching far beneath the sky!
They are sweeter than the anthems that the angels sing on high!
And the long and sandy reaches curving down beside the bay
Coax me, coax me, just to linger where the little children play!
But my unused eyes are aching from the flatness stretching far,
And are longing for the mountains, for each rough scarp and cliff and scar!
And my ears hear from the distance the beloved ferine strain
Of the howler-tortured torrents battling down the glens again!

Oh, the howler-tortured torrents! Oh, the flying spray and spray!
Oh, the house-big rocky fragments flung in some Titanic fray,
And worn smooth through many ages by the torrent's rush and sweep!
Oh, the foam-white falls that thunder where the splendid salmon leap!
They are good, the sleeping bayous! It is good, the sandy shore!
It is good, the spangled prairies stretching westward like a floor!
But through all my sleep or waking comes a voice for me alone,
From the howler-tortured torrents, and the glens that were my own!
—J. M. Lewis, in Houston Post.

A Shattered Idol

By GEORGE SHEDD

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"JUST won't stand it any longer, by gum I won't," and the young man brought his foot down with a bang and tossed the book he was reading into a corner. "I'm going to the city, where things happen and people live. I'm not goin' to rust my life away in this no-account hole. I'm big enough and strong enough and I've got learnin' enough to get along in the city, judgin' by the people I've seen who do get along there, and I'm just goin' to try."

Having made up his mind and set his jaw Homer Dillman proceeded to carry out his plan. He was the likeliest lad in all the countryside about Kaneville. A good-looking fellow, chuck full of energy, ready and anxious to work and he had but one drawback, in the eyes of his father. He was a persistent and omnivorous reader and his taste ran to tales of the great city—and particularly of that mysterious corner known as Bohemia.

"It's all due to that cursed readin'," growled Dillman, Sr., when the boy announced his determination. "I allus said no good 'ud come of it. Come now, Homer, lad, you're doin' right well; you're the high card at the singin' school and spellin' bees and the parties; you're gettin' plenty o' spendin' money, and when you get ready to settle down I'll make over that west sixty to you clean an' clear. There ain't nothin' in this city life; yer nothin' but a slave and ye don't git any good eatin' un decent air. Better stay by the farm, lad."

"No, dad," replied the boy, "I reckon I'll have my fling. I've got a hundred and fifty in the bank and I reckon that'll last me till I get something to do. I don't want to leave you, dad, and I'll miss the old place and all that, but it just seems that I've got to stretch my wings."

So away he went with a brave face and a light heart—albeit the tears were near the surface as he kissed the kind mother and wrung the hand of his sturdy father at the gate and made his way to the little wooden depot at the village.

There had been another farewell the night before. A fresh-faced girl at the village parsonage had heard the news of his going from her lips and the roses in her cheeks had faded. He had tried to comfort her with a show of light-heartedness and some gay references to fame and fortune and a reunion in the future, but he was careful not to compromise himself. He wanted no entangling alliances in the country with the city and Bohemia, with all its mysterious and productive possibilities, directly before him. Bessie was brave and quiet, but her heart was turned to stone. She felt that he was passing out of her life and that he wanted no bonds to connect him with the past.

Homer was dazzled with the music and life of the city. He was a youth of resourcefulness and with his little capital managed to meet some congenial spirits who conducted him into the edge of Bohemia. It was paradise itself when one evening he found himself with a merry party of gay and careless spirits in a cozy restaurant drinking beer out of great mugs and eating curious things off of cracked dishes—all at Homer's expense. Such stories as were told; such songs as were sung; such jests as were passed Homer was sure never had been equalled since the dawn of time, and the cheap actress in her paint and powder appeared to him as the beautiful princess of his childhood fairy stories. He went to his lodging along toward breakfast time in the morning greatly exalted and awoke in the afternoon with a splitting headache.

Of course this sort of thing could not last. Homer's limited purse was nearly exhausted and he realized the utter helplessness of a man in the city without money or employment. He had looked for work steadily, but thus far in a direction which would ally him with the Bohemia for which he had hankered. When he awakened on this

afternoon, however, he counted his few remaining dollars and realized that he must get to work at once. So on the following morning he went resolutely to work to hunt for work, putting behind him his dreams and illusions. Once his level head obtained possession he found little difficulty in finding a job down among the commission houses, which handled farm produce, and to whom his comprehensive knowledge of such things was of value. So he went to work at exceedingly moderate wages, but enough to live on. When he met his Bohemian friends he frankly told them his financial condition—and he saw them no more. This grieved him sorely, but he had some philosophy and went his way, winning small promotions in his business and enjoying more or less the life and movement of the city, and delighting now and then to go to the theatre and feed his ardent imagination on the world of the unreal.

And so ran the world for nearly two years. One evening Homer sat in a chair in front of a cheap hotel watching the people come and go and pass upon the street. He was tired and a little lonesome. His senses seemed more keen and alert than usual. He seemed to see things clearer. The masks seemed to drop off and the haze clear up. He noted, curiously, how they talked and joked about him and how hollow and metallic was their laughter. He noted how artificial the women appeared and most of it all struck him how generally insincere the whole atmosphere was. Nowhere did he see a genuine honest hand-clasp, or hear a hearty word of fellowship. The snatches of conversation he caught all reflected a spirit of cynicism.

In the midst of his reflections the vision of his sturdy father and womanly mother passed before his vision—then followed a long train of figures of the boys and girls back in the country. For a moment he seemed to smell the sweet country air and catch the scent of new-mown hay and the muddy, clattering street faded into a vista of green clad hill and vale.

Coming to with a jolt his nostrils revolted at the clouds of black tobacco smoke and his ears at the rattling vehicles on the stone pavements and the roar of the elevated cars, while his



IT WAS PARADISE ITSELF.

eyes ached at the panorama of tiresome brick and stone. The people about him appeared like ghostly automatons beside the flesh and blood people of his vision and the utter and hopeless hollowness of their lives—of his life—came upon him like a burden.

A shopgirl went by, pale, thin and perennially tired, and presently a woman gaudy with paint and finery—both unnatural, warped and shriveled. To his mind's eye came the picture of Bessie's sweet, rosy face with the healthful play of blood in her veins and a soft light in her honest eyes, which smote him to the heart.

A sudden resolve came to Homer—as sudden as the impulse which had sent him to the city. He would go back to the country and live in God's fresh air and bright sunshine. He would live as men were born to live. He would be a tiller of the soil. He would go to Bessie and—

The next day he gave notice to his employers and ten days later landed at the little depot at Kaneville. You may be sure that the fatted calf was duly killed at the Dillman farm. The next day Homer saw Bessie and—well, there was a new bright light in the eyes of both when they parted.

Cause of Appendicitis.

Physicians have all along contended that appendicitis is an inflammation of the appendix—the result of a digestive disturbance or of lowered vitality of the intestinal tract. The cold food or liquid has the effect of sending the blood from the intestines, the result being that the vitality of the tract is greatly lowered. If this practice is continued, the appendix soon becomes inflamed, and a case of appendicitis results. It is contended that all cases of appendicitis during the summer months are due to cold foods and drinks. The fact that the latter will bring on the disease was first noticed by a German physician, who called the attention of his fellow practitioners to the fact. The result was that patients were carefully watched, and the observations of the German physicians were verified. Therefore, beware of cold things for the stomach in the summer time.

Oldest Mines in America.

The great clock of Wells cathedral, in Somersetshire, England, is very nearly the oldest and certainly one of the most interesting of clocks in existence. It was built in 1322, by Peter Lightfoot, one of the monks of Glastonbury abbey, six miles from Wells, where it ran for 250 years, until the abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII., and its last abbot hanged over his own gateway. The clock was then removed to Wells, where it has been running ever since.—St. Nicholas.

Less Annoying to Tourists.

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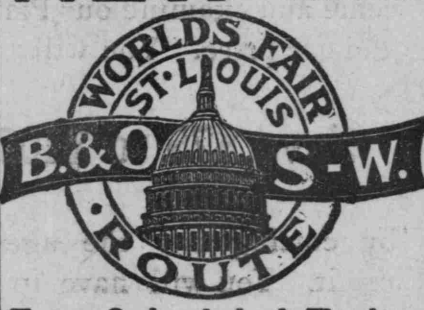
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